Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-34. (Canceled)

35. (Currently Amended) A method of amplifying an RNA target ~~sequence, by transcription under the control of a promoter,~~ sequence in an RNA sample comprising said target sequence, said method ~~comprising~~ comprising:

(A) bringing said sample into contact:

- with a reagent capable of hybridizing with RNA comprising said target sequence,

- in the absence of deoxyribonucleoside triphosphates,

- and with an enzymatic system comprising an RNA polymerase, under conditions allowing the hybridization of said reagent with said RNA comprising said target sequence and under conditions allowing the functioning of said RNA polymerase;

wherein said reagent contains:

(i) a first nucleotide strand comprising: a) a first nucleotide segment capable of playing the role of sense strand of a promoter for said RNA polymerase and b) downstream of said first segment, a second nucleotide segment comprising a sequence capable of hybridizing with a region of said RNA, and

(ii) in the hybridized state on the first strand, a second nucleotide strand comprising a third nucleotide segment capable of hybridizing with said first segment so as to form with it a functional double-stranded promoter; and

wherein said RNA polymerase (1) is a T7-like phage RNA polymerase and (2) is capable of transcribing an RNA template, in the presence of said reagent hybridized

with said template, in the absence of associated protein factor and in the absence of a ligase ~~activity.~~activity; and

(B) amplifying said target sequence by transcription under control of the double-stranded promotor.

36. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 35, wherein said third segment is flanked, at its upstream end, by a fourth nucleotide segment which is shorter than said second segment of the first strand.

37. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 36, wherein said fourth segment is capable of hybridizing with a portion opposite said second segment.

38. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 36, wherein said fourth segment of said second strand is chosen from those whose sequence facilitates the initiation of transcription for said RNA polymerase.

39. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 36, wherein said second segment of said first strand contains a number of nucleotides at least equal to the sum of the number of nucleotides of said fourth segment, if it is present, and of the number of nucleotides of said sequence of the second segment which is capable of hybridizing with said region of said RNA.

40. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 35, wherein said first and third segments consist of DNA.

41. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim ~~35,~~ 36, wherein said fourth segment consists of DNA.

42. (Canceled)

43. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 35, wherein said T7-like phage RNA polymerase is ~~from a family of RNA polymerases~~ selected from the group consisting of T7 RNA polymerase, T3 RNA polymerase and SP6 RNA polymerase.

44. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 35, wherein said T7-like phage RNA polymerase is derived by mutation from an RNA polymerase ~~from a family of RNA polymerases~~ selected from the group consisting of T7, T3 and SP6 RNA polymerases.

45. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 44, wherein said RNA polymerase contains at least one mutation in the region corresponding to the T7 RNA polymerase sequence containing amino acids 625 to 652 (SEQ ID NO: 6).

46. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 45, wherein said RNA polymerase is capable of transcribing a polynucleotide target sequence with a ~~better~~ higher yield when said target sequence consists of RNA than when it consists of DNA.

47. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 35, wherein said enzyme system contains only RNA polymerase activity.

48-68. (Canceled)

69. (Currently Amended) The method of amplifying an RNA target sequence according to claim 35, wherein promoters of the T7-like phage RNA polymerase have a consensus sequence from position -17 to position -1, relative to position +1 being the site of initiation of transcription.

70. (New) The method according to claim 35, wherein said first segment contains at least 9 nucleotides.

71. (New) The method according to claim 36, wherein said fourth segment contains 1 to 18 nucleotides.

72. (New) The method according to claim 71, wherein said fourth segment contains 1 to 12 nucleotides.

73. (New) The method according to claim 35, wherein said first segment contains at least 6 nucleotides.